not in Herbert.

A treatise entitled the Path waye to the towre of perfection.

Compiled by Myles Huggarde, seruant to the Quenes most excellent maiestie.

Janner

~~718~~

748

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BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA·

To the Reader.

VResumed I haue good gentyll Reader,
To make this treatise thus vnlearnedly,
Not that I woulde seeme to be a leder,
Of other men, for trulye none knowe I,
That wourse dothe lyue, displeasing god hye,
Than my selfe dothe, and therfore I pray,
All men to iudge well in that I will saye.

I study not for any eloquence,
For if I dyd my labour were in vaine,
First because I lacke the intelligence,
The whiche therunto doeth truly apertaine:
Secondely if I coulde, litle woulde it gaine,
The simple folke to whō I haue this boke wild,
Whiche in eloquente speache, is litle skilde,

And as for suche as trulye learned be,
The which wil wast time, this treatise to reade
Where they any fault in the same shal see, (nede
I hertely pray thē, where their wisedomes seith
The same to correcte, for why this my dede,
I fancye not so, but I knowe I may erre,
Sith in such mater I do wade so farre.

Well I maye erre I saie, by ignoraunce,
But not to my knowledge that I knowe well,
For in maters of faieth I haue assuraunce,
From whiche I thanke God, I yet neuer fell,
Nor I trust neuer shal, thoughe the deuil in hell,

Would from this same faith me daily perswaid,
But God in whom I trust, is alway mine aide.

This litle worke I haue intiteled,
The Pathe way to the toure of perfection,
Wherin to walke God hath all men willed,
Bothe by him selfe and the discripcion,
Of his blessed worde with this condicion,
That excepte we beleue and his lawe obay,
We are none of his, he dothe plainly saye.

Finis.

It hath bene sated in time gone and past,
That what so euer doth in custome grow,
Very harde it is that away to caste,
Be it good or yll this all men dothe knowe,
Experience partly dothe the proofe showe,
And some custome there is which is indefferent,
And that in my selfe, I see euident,

For to walke abrode my custome oft hath bene
Because in songe of byrdes I had a delite,
Mustinge ofte times what I had heard & sene,
Amonge all degrees of worldly apetite,
Some of whiche groslie in booke I did write,
But euer with one byrde happely I met,
Whiche caused me my penne, to the booke to set.

Callinge to my minde, in my bedde as I laye,
This my former custome taken of olde,
Knowing it was the mery moneth of Maye,
The luste of slepe could me no longer holde,
But that abrode for my pastyme I woulde,
Immediatly into the feldes I went,
Where I thought moost byrdes to be resident.

And as I there walked by a woode syde,
Where pleasauntly al kindes of birdes did singe,
For whose pleasaunt noyse I did their abide,
To here their notes not from nature altringe,
But kepte tune and time, to kinde accordinge,
Which hering many thinges to my mide brought,
Chiefly what nature, God in thē had wrought.

In their kinde our lord thei praise night & day.
Keping perfection in their degree,
In whiche study for a time I did stay,
And laying me downe a while to rest me,
Under the shadowe of a Cypresse tree,
What with this study and the birdes singinge,
Into a sounde slepe these two dyd me bryng.

Now than as I in to this slepe ded fall,
Anone by vision appered to me,
The byrde whiche of olde I had talkte withall:
Aryse man arise for very shame quod she,
And remẽber where of thou diddist bethike the,
When thou diddist lye down, & auoide the blame,
Whiche maye turne thy thought, to thine owne (shame.
Thou diddist while eyze quod she reuolue in thy (minde,
The perfection of vs in our estate,
Now if thou thy selfe accordinge to kinde,
Wilt not labour that way to emytate,
Which mought bring the vnto a perfite rate,
What great shame shal we byrdes bring ỹ vnto,
If thou praise in vs that thy selfe wylte not do.

With that word thã me thought I did awake,
And asked her what I shoulde do in this:
Mary sir quod she if thou paine wilt take,
I wil soone bring the where thou shalt not misse,
To walke in the pathe that moost perfite is,
Shall I go quod I and knowe not whither,
Thou shalt know quod she or thou come thither.

I will

I wyll know first quod I or els ye shall,
Go alone for me where euer it be,
A well quod she, nowe I knowe thy minde all,
Because of the paine, thou art lothe to agree,
To go with me, but hardly chuse the,
Whether thou wylt in slouth, haue short ioy here,
Or els by short paine, haue longe ioy els where.

Longe ioy after this, I rather require,
Then after short ioy, quod I, to haue a long pain
Then quod she if thou wylt haue thy desyre,
Ryse and go with me it is for thy gaine,
Nay tary a while, quod I, for I thinke plaine,
Their is no ioy to this to here these byrdes sing,
And to lie wher so many swet floures doth spring

O fooliche mã quod she this pleasure is vaine,
And shall haue an ende thou knowest not howe
Wilt thou ỹ euerlasting ioy disdaine, (soone
For this shadowe of ioy, than I haue done,
All worldly pleasures thou oughtest to shonne,
And rather to my counsell to applye,
Then in vaine vanites thus for to lye.

Call for grace quod she that thou maist arise,
From all worldly pleasures transitorie,
She is redy and at thine elbowe lyese,
Profringe hir helpe to bringe the to glory,
Plaint these my wordes man in thy memorie.
Refuse not Gods grace whyle she may be taken,
For she bydeth not where she is for saken.

Grace is euer at hande to all those that call for it.
I stande at the dore & knocke Apoc. iii.

O lorde

O lorde quod I howe this moueth my harte,
Faine woulde I go but I haue great hindraũce,
The sprite is redy alway to departe,
But to the fleshe it is a great greuaunce,
But o lorde by grace be thou my gouernaunce,
Then grace me thought toke me by the hãde fast:
saiyng I am thine, tyll thou me of caste.

The fleshe insteth against the spries. Gala. v.

Than vp I rose streight, by the helpe of grace,
To take this iornay to me farre vnknowen,
Now ꝙ I to ẏ birde, I am in such case, (own,
That I am mete to walke while grace is mine
Yet take hede quod she thou be not ouer thrown,
Remembre the saiyng of holy sainte Paule:
Let him that thinkes he stãdes take hede lest he (fal.

i. Cor. x.

Nowe come on quod she, & I wyll flye be fore,
Not to faste quod I, and if thou loue me,
So frowarde quod she, thou art euer more,
To do that whiche to thy great comforte shalbe,
Thy corrupte nature by this thou maiste se:
With that towarde the East she toke her flight,
And I went after as fast as I mighte.

And euer as she had flowne a good waye,
But yet neither out of heringe nor syght,
She would syt downe and for my cõminge stay:
Telling me that I my nature showde right,
In vaine iornaies quod she, thou canst go lyght,
But now thou goest as thou were shod w̃ leede,
Me thinke thou canst scarsly holde vp thy head.

With

With muche a do quod I, I may tell the,
Than forth she flewe farther ouer hyll & dale,
Alas quod I, for paine nowe wo is me,
Myne owne foolishnesse I may here bewale,
With out any comforte that may me auale,
To take this hard iornay what mad mā was I,
Then for verie faintnesse downe I ded lye.

Nowe as I there lay, which was but a while, The temptacion of the flesh
A woman anone vpon me layde holde:
Wilt thou all ioy, quod she, from thee excyle:
Whiche hearinge, for feare it made my hart cold,
Her heyre lay out brayded shininge lyke golde,
Gorgiously decked, with necke and brest baire,
Me thought I neuer sawe woman so faire.

She enbrased me saying their with all:
I am thy darlyng and euer hath bene,
It greueth me to se the thus farre to fall,
In the fondest foly that euer was seene,
All pleasures bodyly thou hast loste cleane,
But those shall enioye it, whiche doth it seeke,
Take this waye & you shall haue it next weeke.

What man would leue me onles he were mad,
Whiche am so swete, faire and amiable,
My rest and ease I take, moost mete to be had,
This paine I abhore as moost excecrable,
Of swete meates I feede, which are delectable,
And in suche pleasures as nature requiere,
I lyue, and so liue at my hartes desyre.

Therfore leue this thy mad foolishenes,
And come backe to ỹ place which thou dost knowe
The pleasures wherof thy proffe doeth expresse,
Lykewise this paine, these paines partly showe,
Therfore sith such paines i this path doth grow,
Go nowe no farther but come backe with me,
For of this iornay, the best thou doest se.

And that is quod I, badde inoughe in dede:
Bad inoughe quod she, nay thou knowest not al,
The paine & trouble, that this way doth breede,
Wyll surely cause the in myserie to fall:
The byrde this hearing to me ded call,
Saying remembre man and call for grace,
Her wicked counsell to flye in this case.

All her inticementes be detestable,
As by her punishmentes doth wel appere,
To shewe all her mischeifes I am not able,
Howe be it some examples thou shalt here,
The whiche may ingender in the a feare,
To folowe her waies, as they did before,
For whiche some were damned for euermore.

Gene 19.

First of Sodome & Gomore marke the ende,
See what vengaunce God on them did take,
Fyre & brimstone from heauen ded discende,
Consuming them all as in a fyrie lake,
Because her beastlines they would not for sake,
And after that, they sounke all downe in to hell,
With the fiue cities which about thē ded dwell.

The

She caused iust Loth to commit incest, Genes.xix.
With his owne doughters by drinkinge excesse,
The Israelites whom God chose for the best, Numme.xxv.
By her mocion fell vnto wyckednes,
And Sāpsō whose strēgth no tōgue cā expresse, Iudi.xvi.
By her was conquered and cleane ouercome,
And vsed by his enmies, as a beast domme.

Dauid whom God so entierly did loue, ii.Reg.xi.
By her intisement did committe adultrie,
And was plaged therfore ỹ proffe did wel proue:
Salomon his sonne of wisedome so hye, iii.Reg.xi.
By her was ouercome and fell to great folye,
Frequenting such fondnes, that I dare not say,
Whether that he was, saued, ye or nay.

All these thou maiest se, by her intisement,
Did fall into gods great indignacion,
Of the which though some were therfore penitēt
Yet some did incurre vtter dampnacion,
And euen so shalt thou, if by instigacion,
Of this fylthy flesche doest folowe her delite,
Thou arte in daunger of losse of heauen quite.

Alas wretched man that I am quod I,
In what wofull case do I nowe stande,
For grace quod she to God do thou crie,
Whiche I did, and then she was at my hande, who that commeth vnto me saith Christ I cast not out of the doore. Ioan vi.
saying, man dost thou not thinke on the bande,
And promise, the whiche I made vnto the,
That til thou cast me of thou shouldest inioy me.

Then by helpe of grace, & godly instruction,
The whiche the good birde did gyue vnto me,
I rose vp auoyding the false seduction,
Of the fleshe, the whiche before me I did se,
Lying on the grounde, seming dead to be,
Gladde was I then of that great victorye,
Then the byrde calling me, furth againe did flie.
(thicke,
After that we went through a woode longe &
Among raginge beastes which were very wyld,
Where thornes to the very bones did me pricke,
So that my strength was almost cleane excyld,
Alas quod I howe thou hast me begyld,
Ys this the true way vnto perfection,
Ye for sothe quod she, by Christes derection.
(go,
Thē no meruaile quod I, though so few doth it
Considring the paines that it doth containe,
Luc. xiii. It behoued Christe quod she, to suffer great wo,
And so to enter heauen, scripture is plaine,
Nowe then if the head, did entre by payne,
Ought not the members to suffer lykewyse,
Onles their soules health they clearly dispyse.

Alas quod I that euer God did ordaine,
This way, for I thinke I shall it neuer passe,
Thē past I this woode, at last with great paine,
Beinge as wery as euer I was:
O mad man quod she, why doest thou trespasse,
Against God so sore, come forwarde for shame,
I must needes rest me, quod I, I am lame,
Then

Then euen at the entring in to a medowe,
Which with swet flowers was goodly garnished
Upon the grene grasse I laide me full lowe,
Lyinge lyke one with paynefulnes punished,
But this pleasaunt reste my harte refreshed,
And as I there lay I sawe sodainly,
A man of hye stature standinge me by.

Aparaled he was in ryche aray,
As though he had been a great prince or kinge, The tẽptation of the worlde.
Alas man quod he what doest thou this way,
Behold what plesures in that pathe doth spring
Wherin I do walke, and with that saying,
He toke me vp streyght and helde me on hye,
Tell me now quod he what dost thou there spie.

O lorde quod I what great ryches I se,
What castels & towers with bildiges sũptuous,
What parks what pastours of great fertilite,
What corne what fruit with woodes plentious,
What oxen, what shepe with catell cõmodious,
What golde and syluer with iewelles most pure,
O that all were mine for euer to endure.

They be all mine, quod he, and I thẽ possesse,
Howe beit if thou wilt come backe with me,
The pleasure of them are thine neuertheles,
And thou shalt entoy them after suche degre,
That thou euen alone a lorde of them shalbe,
I were mad quod I, if I would this forsake,
Then come on quod he, and my way let vs take,

Then he turned backe, and I with hym also,
The whiche the byrde seing, fast on me did call,
Alas man quod she whither doest thou go,
Mary quod I, his pleasures passeth all,
When I them possesse as he saieth I shall,
For he hath showed me, that is my hartes delite
Therfore farewell now, I for sake the quite.

O man quod she, yet call vnto thy mynde,
What God in his worde vnto the doth say,
Who that loueth this world frō gods loue is blī
And iustly shall perishe, this reade thou may,
Wilt thou with the worlde cast thy selfe away,
If thou wylfully my counsell wilt refuse,
And if thou perishe thou canst make none excuse.

The worlde is all set vpon wickednes,
The worlde hath not knowe God, nor neuer will,
The worlde hateth all that loueth godlines,
The world all the lustes of the flesche doth fulfyl,
The world is cursed, for occasions of yll,
The worlde therfore if thou folowe nowe,
God his blessed eare to the wyll not bowe,

The world by his wicked temptation,
Doth drawe the from the pathe of ryghtwisnes,
Wherin thou shouldest fynde great consolacion,
But contrary the world full of wyckednes,
Wyl bring the to sorowe and paines endles.
By his fained ioyes, and crafty deceite,
Which colourably he dothe counterfeite.

I

If thou call not for grace therby to reſiſte,
This temptacion to whiche he dothe moue thee,
Of heauenly ioy thou ſhalt be diſmiſt,
Warned thou art, nowe ſay I loue the,
O lord quod I how theſe wordes doth moue me
Graunt me grace lorde the world to withſtand,
And delyuer me, out of his wicked bande.

Then drewe grace neere and vnto me did ſay,
Becauſe quod ſhe thou dideſt to the world icline
I coulde not abide, he droue me away,
But nowe thou ſeeſt what came of it in fyne,
I confeſſe quod I, the foly was myne,
So ſhould the paine haue been at laſt quod ſhe,
Come backe fro ȳ world to the right path w̄ me,

Then vnto the worlde I had no reſpecte,
But turninge with grace ſhe ſaied againe,
Nowe forwarde quod ſhe and thine eyes erecte,
To the place the whiche thou hopeſt to attaine,
Then the byrde ſeinge me begane to complaine,
Of my frailnes and vnſtabelite,
Chyde no more quod I, my foly I do ſe.

Then ſhe flewe before & bade me come after,
Whiche I did through a mariſe very ſofte,
Wher as I thought I ſhould ſure haue left her,
For in that grounde I ſtũbled wonderous ofte,
Alas quod I that I were paſte this crofte,
And if it be longe I ſhall it not indure,
Well inough quod ſhe, kepe thy footing ſure:

Alas

Alas quod I, who can kepe looking here,
Yt is so slyppery and so softe with all,
The frailtye of this lyfe. I thinke this grounde wyll me not through bere,
At euery steppe I am lyke to fall:
Be content quod she, passe it anone thou shall,
The whiche I did at last with muche a do,
The wourst place it was that euer I came to.

Such a ioynay quod I, I neuer went before,
Nor wyll not do againe if this were ones paste,
Alas for paine quod I, al my bones be sore,
I thinke my good dayes be nowe at the last,
Then came I within a lytle stones cast,
Of a faire grene, whiche when I did spye,
Yonder is a good place to reste me thought I.

And when I there came I laye downe in dede,
There for to rest me amonge the swete flowers:
I wys quod the byrde this is more then neede,
To go farther quod I, passeth al my powers,
He that had suffred so many sharpe showers,
As I haue done, woulde scant go on his feete,
Mary.xl. The hope of ioy quod she, shuld make the paines (swete.
Then thinking of that ioy my hart did reuiue,
And with that one behinde me did apeire,
Whiche in proporcion had suche prerogatiue,
That to tell it plaine I can go nothing neere,
But his voice and wordes right wel I did here,
The reporte of the deuill. O happy man quod he howe blessed arte thou,
that such paines doth take which god doth alow

Thou

Thou oughteſt quod he in this act to reioyce,
Becauſe thou doeſt in this, thy tyme ſo wel ſpēd,
Glorie therein, for bleſſed is thy choyce,
Thine act, in to al coostes ſhall extende,
And hyely the worlde wyll it commende,
To thy great fame and praiſe perpetuall,
In hope wherof, procede thou furth with all.

Thy wordes quod I doth let my hart on fyre.
Nothinge ſhall let me forwarde to procede,
That fame is it whiche nature doth require,
Then do thou quod he, folowe it in dede,
For vnto perfection, it wyll the lede,
And if any do aboue the take place,
Thinke that he dothe it thy fame to deface:

With that I neither hard nor ſawe him more,
Then roſe I wel eaſed and forwarde made haſt,
The byrde thā beheld me beyng before,
Stay thou foole quod ſhe, thy time thou doeſt waſt
For ſoth thou haſt had a goodly repaſte,
Wherby as great a profite thou ſhalt fynde,
As of the duſte borne aboute with the wynde,

The property of whiche is to blinde the eyes,
And ſo hath his counſell done vnto the,
So redye thou arte thy ſelfe to exerciſe,
In that whiche thy hole diſtruction ſhalbe,
I promiſe the quod I, I do not that ſe,
For me thought that all his counſell was good,
As thy fooliſhe fancy quod ſhe vnderſtoode.

For if of grace thou were not destitute,
Thou mightest at the first him perceiue wel,
For he vsed the meanes whiche doth confute,
Esaih.bi. and xiii. Eche kinde of vertue as scripture doth tell,
Esay.xiiii. The deuill by pryde, thought him selfe to excell,
Aboue the moost hyest whiche is God eterne,
And so folowe him he did the nowe lerne.

But what came of him that so hye did looke,
When he had thought to be hyest of all,
God for his pryde suche vengaunce on him toke,
That by and by in to hell he did fall,
There to remaine in paines perpetuall,
Nowe as he in him selfe gaue him selfe praise,
So doth he moue the to bringe the that waies.

Then marke at the last with what he did end,
Not only did he prouoke the to pryde,
But to enuy those, that to vertue alcende,
In whiche his owne nature he doth not hyde,
For whan in heauen he coulde no lenger abide,
Gene.iii. He seinge man after warde in paradise,
For enuy to synne he did man intise.

Now thou or suche like, that enuiously,
Hath enuy at those whiche passe the in grace,
Wherby in some gyftes their knowledge is hye,
Thou doest, I say, reseble in that case,
The deuill whiche laboreth all vertue to deface,
And as he in euerlastinge paine shall reste,
So shalt thou with him haue a free intreste,

Enuy

Enuy moued Cayne, to sle iuste Abell, Gene iiii.
Enuy moued Saull, Dauid to persue, 1. Reg. xviii.
Enuy moued Jacobs sõnes, there brother to sel, Gene xxxvii.
Enuy moued Rachell against Lya true, Gene. xxx.
Enuy moued the Jewes against Christ Jesu, Matth. xxvii.
Enuy of vertue well neuer iudge rycht,
Enuy blindeth men, from all heauenly sight,

By pryde thus thou seest how Lucyfer did fall,
And what enuy worketh where he doth raine,
Eschewe them therfore or perishe thou shall,
With the deuill and his in eternall paine:
Wylt thou nowe lose thy labour all in vaine,
And chaũge the praise of mẽ for heuens reward,
Which as a blast of wide thou oughtist to regard

Now chose the thou arte at thy libertee,
Which of these rewardes for thi paines thou wilt take,
The one is all an endles felicitee,
The other is burninge in thinfarnall lake,
In suche flaminge fyer as neuer shall slake,
Alas quod I, howe all my bones shake for fere,
These horable threetninges of thee thus to here.

With hell paines in dede I threten ỹ quod she,
Because I perceiue no loue wyll the drawe,
To leue thy wyckednes whiche in the I se,
Rebellyng against both God and his lawe,
Oh quod I how this my conscience doth gnawe:
Praye for grace quod she, so I do quod I,
I am redy quod grace, repente thy folye,

Thus our lorde God preserued me by grace,
And thē I thought my selfe in case wōders wel,
Nowe quod I to the byrde go forwarde a pace,
For myne enimies whiche caused me to rebell,
Be now ouer throwne, I thynke downe in to hel
Nay nay, man quod she, they are as redy all,
As euer they were, to cause the to fall.

Therfore quod she thou must thy selfe prepare,
Their suttell assautes, to with stande alway,
Or els they wyll sure take the againe in snare,
Againe quod I, alas what shall I saye,
Forsoth quod she, to God styll thou must praye,
That wyl I do quod I, thē come forth quod she,
And the towre of perfection anone thou shalt se,

But first quod she I wyll tell the one thinge,
Thou must prepare thy selfe some paines to take
For vnto the towre or I can the bring, (forsake
Thou shalt mete with those whō thou maist not
For they must saue the from a perilous lake,
Which standes in the way very brode and wide,
In whiche thou shalt fall, onles they the gyde.

Alas quod I, haue I yet more a do,
That thou hast quod she, there is no remedy,
Then that towre quod I, shall I neuer come to,
I warant the quod she, stande mankully,
Then with in a while, the pyt I did espye,
And at the brinke therof stoode the same thre,
The whiche before that, had assauted me.

the world the
the and the
wyll.

What

What callest thou yonder pyt tell me quod I:
The pyt quod she of disperacion;
And they thre stande there to the ende only,
To drawe the in, to thy condemnacion,
I bade the therfore to make preperacion,
To resiste them, for they wyll the assaile,
But stande fast and it shall turne to thine auaile,

With that the world, ẏ flesche & the deuil also,
Sprede all my synfull dedes before my face,
And accused me, saiinge thou wretched man loo,
What wretch art thou, offēding god in such case
To thinke that God wyll gyue to the his grace,
Remembre how he hath sith the world begāne,
Condemned all suche, as from his lawe ranne,

The Deuyll woulde bringe man to disperacion.

That is false ꝙ the birde, god cōdēneth none,
But such as in to that wicked pyt doth fall,
Or suche as by errour from true faith are gone,
Or suche as repent not their lyues beastiall,
Therfore man quod she for helpe of God call,
That thou maist haue grace, which most perfite
To resist the deuill so full of malice. (is

The true preacher of the worde of God.

Then vnto heauen I did lifte vp myne eyes,
Saying, o lorde thy grace vnto me sende,
Beholde a wretched man, which for mercy cries,
Euen redy to perishe onles thou extende,
Thy mercy on me, so greatly I offende,
And therfore vnworthy, thy mercy to haue,
Sauing for thy promise, in which mercy I craue

Then came grace to me the whiche with her
Two deuout ladyes of vertu excellēt, (brought,
Here is faith & hope & grace, take no thoughte,
For God by me nowe, hath them to the sent,
To bringe the out of thy daunger present,
The office of Fayth. I gaue the lyght quod faith, the ryght waye to se
For one foote thou couldest not go with out me.

Althoughe presently I did not a pere,
Yet was it I that first to this did the moue,
The office of hoope. And I quod hoope did thy hart alway chere,
For by me thou didest trust to ascende aboue,
To the place which thy soule naturally doth loue
Yet the world the flesche & the deuil most wicked,
Yf I were not had the here confounded,

Man naturally abhorreth al bo dily payne and therfore wolde come to heuē with out paine Oh good lord quod I, how happy am I now,
That faith and hoope I haue thus optained,
I trust that by the onlye helpe of you,
I shall not be nowe any more pained,
As before I was, but now retained,
With you twaine I trust, I shall be,
And so with out pain to yonne towre to brīg me.

what auaileth it a man to say he hath fayeth when he hathe no workes, can fayth saue him Jac. ii. O vaine mā quod faith how thou art deceiued,
Thinkest thou I am sent for thy bodily ease,
To coloure or clooke thy foule sinnes cōmitted,
By which thy lord god thou dost daily displease,
Though with out me thou canst not his wrathe apease
Yet hauing me if thou dost me abuse,
To bring the thither I do here refuse.

And

And all though ȳ hoope, that I am only she,
Whiche am thy comforte in this thy progresse,
And if thou to do goddes wyll wilt not agree,
Thou shalt not by me haue any good successe,
Because thou turnest me by thy wylfulnesse,
From true hoope vnto vaine presumtion,
I shall the rather be thy confucion.

Ye haue brought me now ȳ I vnto my wittes ende
I am in case now, worse thē euer I was,
Thou shalt know by vs quod thei, how to ascēd.
Vnto perfection, and if thou doest passe,
On our counsell, but me thinke alas,
Thou regardest not thy soules health at all,
For whiche I feare the daunger of thy fall,

Then shew me quod I what shal I do here in,
The byrde ȳ faith which doth lede the the way,
Will teach the wher thou shalt after this begine.
Whose counsell refuse in no wyse thou may,
And now thou arte preserued this day,
From disperacion, we wyll leue the here.
And yet bide with the, though we not thus apere

With that they vanisht fro my syght corporall,
And I stoode ā much on their saynges did muse,
Than came the byrde and vnto me did call,
What wilt thou do quod she, take or refuse,
There counsell gyuen, or els wylt thou vse,
Thy frowarde custome, and go backe againe.
Nay rather quod I, I will take a great paine.

For

For by faith and hoope me thinke I do se,
The great ioy and pleasure which doth remaine.
In the towre of perfection: a well quod she,
I am glad I haue you in so good a traine,
I haue no cause nowe on the to complaine,
Come on, for anone thou shalt come so nere,
That the sight of the towre to the shall appere.

Shall I yet quod I, but come to the syght,
No forsoeth quod she, and that is well I trowe,
Doest thou set thy most sinfull dedes so lyght,
The whiche the deuill before the did showe,
But what thou shalt do first anō thou shalt know
I am content quod I then come forth quod she,
With that we came where I a great stone walle
(did se.

This wall was made of very ragged stone,
In the whiche stoode a dore wonderfull straite,
What wall is this quod I, I neuer sawe none,
So full of sharpe stone and so narowe a gate:
By this dore quod she all people of eche estate,
Doth enter, or els come they neuer shall,
Unto the towre, for it standes with in this wal.

Math. vii. The straite gace.

For this is the straite & narow way quod she,
To the whiche Christ hath all people exhorted,
And this wall in closeth, as thou anone shalt see,
The felde of penaunce, in thre partes deuided,
Through whiche to passe by grace thou shalt be
Lord graūt me grace ꝙ I, ẏ ēter I may, (gided
I am at hand ꝙ grace I wyl lede thee, the way.

Then

Then by the hand to the gate she brought me,
In at the which I entred with great paine,
Then euen by and by, a woman I did se, Contricion.
Which of my synfull dedes did sore complaine,
The whiche to mone & weepe did me cõstraine,
Considring my sinnes of which then I thought:
O lord what sorow thẽ in my hart she wrought.

This is quod grace perfite contricion,
Whiche doth moue the thy sinne to lament,
This is quod she the first perticion,
By whiche all true christians euer went.
With that the nexte gate I sawe euident,
With in whiche a wofull lady did stande,
The whiche helde her hart openly in her hande. Confession.

Whõ when I beheld, she made my hart quake:
Alas quod I, let not me come neere her,
Thou maiest in no wise quod grace her forsake
Painful though she be thou maist not forbere her
For by her from sinne, thou shalt be made clerer,
Then what is her name tell me true quod I,
Her selfe quod grace shall tell the by and by.

With that this woman of me had a syght,
Come nere man quod she and be not afraied,
Thou seist how I shewe my hart in the lyghte,
So must thou also thy sinnes beinge waied,
Shewe forth thy hart mã, why hast thou staied,
For of all vyces I am a confounder,
And in thy soule, of vertue a grounder.

Who art thou quod I of so great vertue,
I am quod she perfite confession,
Which doth mannes soule truly renewe,
Beinge penitent for his transgression,
And to folowe Christe hath an affection,
My hart here therfore I shewe openly,
No sinne I do hyde I sygnyfye therby.

Gene.iii. Our lorde whiche is auctor of all goodnes,
Ordained me when the first man did sinne,
Causinge him his faute plainly to confesse,
Seeke the scripture thou shalt finde it therin:
Shall I quod I, nay my wyt is to thin,
Then wyll I quod she make a relacion,
Of certaine places for my probacion.

ii. Reg. xii. and Psalm. xxxi. Dauid the prophet did his faute confesse,
And did therfore very greatly lament,
Gene.iiii. And Cayn whiche cõmitted so great wickednes,
Confessed his sinne though not penitent,
Leui.iiii.c.vi. And in the law wryten by Gods cõmaundemẽt,
Men came before God their sinnes confessinge,
Whose sinnes the people knew by their kinde of offring.

Luc.iii. Also in the Gospell, for to come more nere,
Diuerse whiche herde John the Baptest preach,
Asked what they shuld do which whẽ he did here
Euery man in his degree he did teache,
To reforme their fautes like a good soules leach
And this did he not in a generalite,
But one by one eche after their qualite.

By

By whiche it doth apere that they confessed, Actor. 19.
Their sines to him first, his answeres declareth,
And by saint James it is plainly expressed, Jacob. 5.
Where he of the calling of the preistes speaketh,
To anoynt the sycke, euen anone therwith,
Confesse your sunnes one to an other saith he,
Which is the sycke man to the preist, that muste (nedes be,

Thus I am nedefull and also aunciente,
And therfore I trowe thou wylt me not refuce,
To alowe the quod I, I am content,
But yet at thin age somwhat I do muse,
For some wryt that men of olde did the not vse,
Thou wast made they say in Latrense counsell,
Thei are deceiued quod she, which that tale doth (tel

For auncient wrytters diuerse ther be,
Whiche wrot before that councell many daies,
The whiche for very godly doth alowe me,
Beinge ryghtly vsed as the doctours saies,
But that counsell stablisht me, no man denaies,
And vsed I am nowe as I euer haue bene,
But whan I first began fewe hath seene.

The cause in dede of the coũselles stablishmẽt,
Was because the people slacke and loth were.
To confesse their sinnes so maliuolent,
They thought a great shame in a mans eare,
To shewe their sinnes, by whiche did apeare,
Many stodde in feare any synne to commit,
Remẽbrynge that to a man they should shewit.

Who art thou quod J of so great vertue,
J am quod she perfite confession,
Which doth mannes soule truly renewe,
Beinge penitent for his transgression,
And to folowe Chriſte hath an affection,
My hart here therfore J shewe openly,
No sinne J do hyde J sygnyfye therby.

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And therfore I trowe thou wylt me not refuce,
To alowe the quod I, I am content,
But yet at thin age somwhat I do muse,
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Thou wast made they say in Latrense counsell,
Thei are deceiued quod she, which that tale doth
(tel

For auncient writters diuerse ther be,
Whiche wrot before that councell many daies,
The whiche for very godly doth alowe me,
Beinge ryghtly vsed as the doctours saies,
But that counsell stablisht me, no man denaies,
And vsed I am nowe as I euer haue bene,
But whan I first began fewe hath seene.

The cause in dede of the coũselles stablishmẽt,
Was because the people slacke and loth were.
To confesse their sinnes so maliuolent,
They thought a great shame in a mans eare,
To shewe their sinnes, by whiche did apeare,
Many stoode in feare any synne to commit,
Remẽbrynge that to a man they should shew it.

That it bridled me frō sinne ỹ church lorelaw
And what cōfort to, come to mens soules therby
The councell bounde men therto by a lawe,
Because it shoulde be obserued truly,
As it had bene before auryculerly,
Thus howe I was vsed in the lawe olde,
And howe in the newe I haue the plaine tolde.

The sacramēt of penaunce.

Then forwarde I went grace cōducting me,
Passinge that walke with much shamfastnes,
A preiste then cōminge to me I did se,
Whiche semed to be of great holynes,
Because quod he thou comest thy sines to cōfesse
Losed from them thou shalt be forth with all,
And receiue absolucion sacramentall.

Then I kneled downe and after confession.
I did receiue of him this holy sacrament,
To my great comforte and consolacion,
Gyuing me salues for my sores corespondent,
Cōmaunding me my sinnes styll to lament,
Now come on quod grace, & forwarde procede,
For to the nexte gate I wyll the streight lede.

Charites.

Then ouer that, I came to this gate,
One lady I met whiche brought with her thre,
Other women whiche were of a straunge estate,
With whom I had, had small familiarite,
For truly they were straungers vnto me:
These be quod grace thre Ladies good and iust,
Which in at yonder gate nedes bere thou must.

Bere

Bere them quod I, it is not possible,
The gate is to narowe and strait a great waye.
And I beinge redy bothe weake and feble,
I can not se howe, bere them in I may,
To bere them quod grace do thou not denay,
Yet first quod I let me know who they be:
Prayer, fastinge, and almes dedes quod she.

At that word I began both to chrug & chrinke,
Alas thought I what a burthen is this,
Then came faith & hoope saiing, mā the bethinke
Of the ioy, whiche prepared for the is,
By Christe thy lorde, and thou shalt finde iwys,
That this burthen shalbe to thy paine but small
Nay rather thou shalt thinke it no paine at all,

My yocke is sweet & my burthen is lyghte. Math. xi.

Then began my sprytes here with to reuiue,
Seinge, Faith, Hoope, and also Charite,
Standinge me by, no payne could me dryue,
To go back therfro, but rather thei so moued me
That long I thought tyl I the towre should se,
What cal ye yonder gate ꝙ I, fain I wold here,
Where throughe these thre on my backe I must
(bere

This is quod grace the gate of Satisfaction: Satisfaction.
Ys it quod I, mary the worlde dothe saye,
That of Christes death it is a detraction,
Therfore enter there, by no meanes I maye,
Those ỹ so saith, qđ faith, taketh it ỹ wrōg way,
For it is not vnderstāde, that man shall satysfye,
As though Christ had not done it sufficiently.

The true vnderstanding of satisfaction on mans parte to God ward.

But because his lawes mā hath not duly kept
And thē by these vertues wil please him again,
Of his great goodnes he dothe it accepte,
As a satisfaction on mans parte plaine:
Doth this proue christes death isufficiēt & vain,
Nay it settes furth his glory, syth he wyll thus,
Crown his own workes wrought by him in vs.
(must
Come therfore q faieth for enter needes thou
And labour there in truly with al thy hole powre
Yea quod hoope or els by me thou canst not trust
To atcheue thy purpose in the perfite towre,
Thou must not qō charite, thinke thy pain sowre
For if thou doest I will for sake the quite,
And then in all thy workes God will not delite.
(hast
Therfore come furth quod she & to ēter make
With all my hart quod I, I therto consent,
They would not suffer me any tyme to wast,
Then on me I toke, these vertues continent.
And tyll I came to the gate I did not stent:
Marke this. Thē met me corrupt nature which trouble me sō
That he stopte me at the gate in I could not go.

Such mē make not there workes there saui-our.

O Blessed God quod I, now I se right well.
Without thou helpe neuer enter I shall.
Then harde I a swete texte of the Gospell,
Which was, come to me you that labour al,
Math. xi. And I wyll refreshe you: at the whiche call,
My hart did reioyce, then faith pointed me,
To loke in at the gate what I could there se.

There

Ther me thought I saw christ w̄ his wouñds ble
Which said cõe to me, thi lacke I wil supply, (dig
In my bitter death, because thou accordinge,
Unto my holy worde, doest thy wyll apply,
Though nature hinder the, I graunt the mercy,
And because thou hast done thy deligence,
Come in I pardon the for natures offence.

Oh with what ioy thẽ this did my hart perce,
To here of my sauiour these wordes cõfortable,
With a thowsande tonges I could it not reherce
If with so many to speake I were able,
I being a wretche in case miserable,
Worthy dampnation, oh wonderfull kindenes,
That my louing lorde to me did expresse.

Then at his feete prostrate I fell humbly,
And for bery ioy, braste out on weppynge:
Saiynge, oh my soule, thy lorde magnifye,
And thou my spirite also, reioyce accordinge,
In God my sauiour, to me most louinge,
Whiche of his great mercy, hath had a respecte,
To me a poure wretche, with sinfulnes infecte.

Come forward quod Christ & now folow me,
For I am the light, the lyfe, the truth & the way,
Then perfitly the towre before me I did se,
The glory wherof expresse I ne may,
I repented muche that so longe a delaye,
I made by my foly, more regardinge,
The vanites worldly then this heauenly thinge.

Then

Then with dilygence, after Chriſt I went,
Euen as nye as nature woulde ſuffer me,
Which was farre behinde, but faith then preſent.
Did comforte me ſaying, thine imbiſelite,
Shal from yonder towre, not muche hinder the,
Sith to go forward thou applyeſt thy good will,
And doeſt kepe me, and my ſyſters with the styl.

By helpe of grace quod I, I truſt I ſo ſhall,
Thē walking thetherward, the towre I did vew
Which had but onlye one gate or portall,
To enter in by, on which was Jeſu,
Deckt with precious ſtones frō which did inſew,
So glorious a lyght, that the day might well,
Be called derkenes, this lyght did ſo excell.

Then ſaw I before me diuers bye wayes,
In the whiche diuers men diuerſly did go,
Making in the way many ſtoppes and ſtayes,
Lyke people ouerſeene, wandring to and fro,
What meane youn folke quod I, to walke thoſe pathes ſo,
Thei are mē of faith of incōſtāt mīde,
Which are ouerthrown, with eche blaſt of wide.

Some again which ſawe their way cōberous
Full of ſharpe thornes which did vexe them ſore,
They thought it ſhould not be, to thē ſo troblous
Lyke wytty men they ſpred carpetes thē before,
Upon the which of folke went many a ſcore,
So deintely and nicely as though they woulde,
Not offende the fleſhe, for a great deale of golde.

Tell

Tell me quod I, I pray you who be those,
Which maketh their way so pleasant to go vpō, Epistle. ii. Pe. ii.
Thei be such ꝙ she, as be their own fooles, (none,
These lai al on christes back, paines thei wil take
Thei frame thē selues a faith, letting christ alone,
And assure them selues in to heauen to be take,
By a promise whiche Christ did neuer make.

An other way I saw which very painful was Ipocrites.
And yet all those people which in it went,
Letted for no payne but through it did pas:
Yonder folke quod I, hath muche labour spent,
And styll in one place they be permanent,
Thold prouerbe quod she, true in thē thou maiest finde,
The faster they go the farther behinde.

Why so quod I, mary because quod she, (loke,
These are those whiche for worldly praise dothe
They seme forwarde to go, as farre as men se,
Unto perfection, but God did neuer brooke,
Any suche walkers, but them alway forsooke,
Therfore stand they styll, and do no farther go,
But take their rewarde here, their request is so.

An other sort I saw which kept no path at al,
But rā amōg buches wher thei their clothes rēt These are spoken of by S. Iu. in his Epistle. ann. ii. Pe. ii. Contempners of all good orders and also of men in authoritie.
And sōe time amōg floures wher thei oft did fal
And some time stucke fast i ꝑ mier wher thei wēt
Yonder folke ꝙ I, to take paines do not stent,
Like mad men me thinke: these be those quod she
Whiche to honest order will neuer agree.

Sondry sectes of heretikes.

Then sawe I an other great rablement,
Whiche busseled togither out of quietnes,
Not one of them was with another content,
Many pathes thei had which I can not expresse
Going out of that, where they wēt therprogresse
Of the which eche of them contrariely,
Affirmed to be the right way to the towre hye.

Yonder folke quod I, me thinke can not agree,
No maruaile quod she for as it doth appere,
Many wayes out of one going thou doest see,
That one wai is error, which al mē ought to fere
And those pathes are opiniōs, going nothig nere
Towardes perfection, and yet they do all,
Eche to defēde his own wai, striue chide & braul.

The heathen Philosephers.

Then in an other pathe, I sawe men discrete,
Walkinge soberly, the way being harde,
And eche of them, looked wysely to his feete,
For feare of fallyng, they had so good regarde,
In kepyng their walke, to this hye towre ward,
Then beholding them, I sawe they were blynd,
And therfore the ryght pathe, could they neuer (fynde.

Of all sortes quod I, that I did yet see,
These men were most like in this towre to dwel
They were so quod she, for these men only be,
Those whiche in morall vertues did hye excell,
As their lyues in writing doth vs painly tell,
But yet because of faith they neuer had the light
Ascende to this towre truly they neuer myght.

then

Then in this thornye way wherin I did go,
I sawe some people walke, but in number smal,
Alacke quod I for paine, that I see no mo,
Walke the right pathe to the lyfe eternall,
A great sort I see walke the way infarnall,
Remember quod she, what Christes sayinges be
Many their be calde, but fewe chosen saith he.

Tr[illegible] are but [illegible] comparison [illegible] the wicked.

Many runne, but one wynneth the game.

And againe, strait and narow is the gate,
The which doth lede vnto saluacion,
And very fewe therby which goeth in therate,
Lyke wyse the way leding to dampnation,
Is a very large ambulacion,
And many there be which doth go that way,
Therfore wonder not though many do decay.

Then praised I God for his great mercy,
Because he forgiueth sinners theri sinfulnes,
Namely all those that do penitently,
Do true penaunce, for their sinfull wickednes,
And againe I praised him for his rightwisenes,
Wherby he doth iustly condemne al those,
The which wilfully, their owne soules wyl lose.

With that to the towre I came very nye,
The lowest part where of was humilite,
Upon the which was set two pillers great & hie
Iustice was the one staied vp by equite,
Lawe, correction, iudgement and verite,
This pyller one corner of this towre did vphold,
The goodnes wherof by me can not be tolde.

The discripciō of the towre of perfection.

Iustice.

Fortitude. The other pyller was force or fortitude,
Which was strongly staide by magnificence,
With constaunce also whiche dothe exclude,
All wauering thoughtes which troubleth cõscience
Toleraunce, which bereth & forgiueth ech offence
And perseueraunce kept all these from seperacio
This of vertue is worthy commendacion,

The other corners had two pillers lyke case,
Prudence. Of the whiche the one was called Prudence,
Whiche doth all rude rashenes clearlye deface,
Strongly it was bildid by honest prouidence,
The feare of God, and counselles intelligence,
With memory which doth bere al this in minde,
This piller wil not moue with any blast of wide.

Temperaunce. The fourth and last pyller, was temperaunce,
The chiefe stay of whome was called discretio,
Moralite also whiche maketh no vttraunce,
Against the vertue of nature at no season,
Fasting and sobernes ioyned with reason,
Taciturnitee, to rule the tonge ryghtly,
And dispising worldly thiges not vsed discretly.

On these foure pillers stood this godly foure,
And all the vertues which on them did depende,
Made the walles betwyxt vnto the hyest flooze
Aboue whiche to looke I did mine eyes extende,
Foure turretes I sawe which I cold not cõpze=
Which was pfit charite, faith, hope & grace, (hẽd
Fro whõ spzed ỹ vertues which couerd alỹ place

From

From grace did procede all the other thre,
And betwyxt al foure stoode the batilmētes hye:
The roofe of this towre, then well did I se,
Came from faith, hoope and charite truely:
From faith I saw procede euidently,
Religion, clennes, and obedience,
Chastite, virginitee and holy continence.

From charite came petie, peace and swetnes.
Mercy compassion and benignitee,
Concorde vnite and fre forgyuenes,
Amitee vnfained with liberalitee,
Praier, Almyse and Hospitalitee,
These were of suche vertue that they had power,
To couer thre partes of the roffe of this towre.

From hoope did procede holy contemplacion,
True confession, ioy and honeste,
Compunction of hart the soules consolacion,
Pacience also and longanimitee,
These couerde this towre of hye felicitee,
And to garnische it godly, I sawe on the wall,
The foure Euangelistes and the Apostels all.

Prepare thy selfe quod faith, now to enter in
Sith thou hast come the pathe perfite and good,
And therfore by Christ art vnlade of sinne,
Thou must receiue Christes very flesche & bloud,
Which is of thy soule the moost precious foode,
With ioyfull hart quod I, I do therto consent,
Thou shalt receiue him quod hoope continent.

Exortation.

O mã quod charite remember the great loue,
Whiche thy sauiour Christ hath showed vnto the,
He being Gods eternall sonne aboue,
Woulde for thy sake discende to the degree,
Of thy mortall state, vexed with myserie,
Only synne excepte, and yet besyde this,
Woulde dye a shamefull death, for thy faute and (not his.
And yet w̄ this vile death his loue did not cease,
But ordained him selfe at his last supper,
To be eaten of the, thy faith to increase,
What greater loue coulde euer, any man vtter,
To his derest frende, but his loue muche further.
He extended to the, (being his ennimie),
By gyuinge to the, his owne blessed body.

For the he died, for the he rose againe,
For the he did ascende, for the to make the waye,
And as he did ascende, to make the certaine,
To ascende with him, he gaue him selfe I saye,
To be eaten of the, because he woulde staye,
Thy faith, that thou shuldest, not thike his death
He wold haue ꝑ truly, in hī, incorporate. (frustrat

Then of heauē ꝙ hoope, nedes thou must be sure
If thou dwell still in him, and he lyke case in the,
He beinge the head, and thou a member pure,
Must folowe the head, this can non other be,
Thou must be sure ꝙ faith, that thy hart agre,
That christes own flesche is ther, as hī selfe doth
Or els thou art begyld, & shal be cast away. (say

Now

Now for as much quod faith as thou haſt don
To enter this towre of perfection, (thy beſt
By eatinge his fleſhe thou ſhalt haue intreſt,
For he is of him ſelfe, thy only derection,
Unto this towre, therfore thine affection,
Set thou in him, for with out him be thou ſure,
Enter here, thou coldiſt not with corrupt nature

Then out of this towre came a prieſt deuout,
Whiche brought with him the holy ſacrament,
With many Angels compaſſinge him about,
Which ſõge ſwet himmes with voices excellent.
Henoring their kinge whom they knew preſent.
Then faith bade me on my knees to knele down,
Whiche I did, then for ioy, I was lyke to ſowne.

Then after my confeſſion generall,
And other praiers mete, gyuen me by grace,
I did receiue this ſacrament principall,
Wherby I chaunged to a perfite caſe,
Then the Angels drue about me apace,
Uſinge me muche hyer then felowe lyke:
The whiche a great ioy to my hart did ſtrike.
(ſynge,
Then begane the Angels with great ioye to
Prayſing God hyely for my conuerſion,
Fro my ſynfull lyfe, and ſo did me bringe,
With more ioy then euer I can thinke vpon,
Into this godly towre, oh what ioy alone,
It was to be there, my tonge can not tell,
The bleſſednes therof did all my wittes excell.

It

If with a thowsande penes at ones I could write
And w as many tōges, þ same time could speake
Yea, if al lyuing men, woulde the ioyes indite.
Which I had in this towze, thei were al to weake
What should I herein my wittes farther breake,
It pleased me so that I wished sure,
Euermoze in the same towze to indure.

Thus in ioying this ioy euen sodainly,
Out of this traunce, then I did awake,
And foūd my self ther wher I first down did lye
Foz sozowe and shame all my bones did shake,
Because this iournay on me I do not take,
And as I homewarde went, to God I did pray,
That he would graūte vs all to walke this true (way
The whiche if we do, then no doute we shall.
First haue ioye here by peace of conscience,
And after this ioy, the ioyes perpetuall,
The which to expresse doth passe all science,
God graunte vs all to do our diligence,
To serue him here in perfite vnite,
And then to enioye endles felicitee. Amen.